

as minute an examination as if he were in my hand. I was more than astonished to find here close to the pavements of a great city the representative of a race which always loved the wild woods and which I thought had passed away from Illinois forever."

Mr. R. W. Stafford of Chicago, Ill., who has shot hundreds of Pigeons in former years within the present city limits of Chicago, informs me that in the latter part of September, 1894, while shooting at Marengo, Ill., he saw a flock of six flying swiftly over and apparently alight in a small grove some distance off.

The above records will show that while in this section of country large flocks of Passenger Pigeons are a thing of the past, yet they are still occasionally observed in small detachments or single birds. — RUTHVEN DEANE, *Chicago, Ill.*

**Ospreys at Bristol, R. I.** — All along the shores of Mount Hope Bay on the promontory of Bristol, Rhode Island, the Osprey breeds in comparatively large numbers. Although the surrounding country is geologically the same in character yet only few nests are to be found elsewhere. The island of Rhode Island itself, I believe, has a few nests on its shores and near Wickford and along the Providence River a half dozen or so scattered pairs breed.

But there is in Bristol proper each summer, a colony, if so it can be called, consisting of fifteen pairs. Seven of the nests are in dead buttonwood trees (*Platanus occidentalis*) and the remaining eight are built on a kind of structure erected by the farmers for their convenience; namely, a stout pole, averaging twenty-five feet in height, on the top of which an old cart wheel has been placed. In some instances a crossbar forming a perch is nailed just below or on the upper side of the wheel.

After a new pole has been raised, which is generally in the autumn, the coming spring sees it taken by a pair of Hawks. The farmers claim that the birds arrive regularly on the tenth of April, that is at the departure of the Gulls northward. They immediately commence repairing the damage done to their home during the past winter. At this time they can be seen flying about with long streamers of eel-grass trailing from their talons. From yearly additions the nests reach enormous dimensions and between the spokes of the wheels and among the heavy sticks that form the base, English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) build. About the first week in May the females lay three eggs (very rarely four) and by the last of the month or in the first week in June the fluffy bodies of the young can be seen above the edge of the nest. By the middle of August they are able to care for themselves.

In one of the pole nests in the summer of 1890 the birds had, either in repairing it or in some other way, brought a bulb or seed of a weed to the nest where, cultivated by the decayed fish, it grew to the height of two or three feet. They paid no attention to it and in the course of a few weeks it withered and died.

The Osprey obtains the greater part of its living in Bristol from the fish seines that run out from the shores in every feasible place, and the Hawks are to be seen at all hours of the day sitting on the poles that support the nets, now and then driving in, or rather dropping down, to obtain some denizen that it contains. In the noonday numbers of Hawks gather over the bay and fields and, mounting high in the air, circle round and round, uttering a combination of piercing, musical cries, which the farmers insist upon calling a song. This song, if so it can be called, begins with three notes in the same key, then two in a higher, and then the completing note in the same key with the first three. If the cry of any Hawk can be spoken of as a song, these six musical notes of the Osprey are certainly as near to it as any.

The Ospreys in Bristol have been so carefully watched,—as the belief among the farmers is that they protect their poultry from other marauding Hawks,—that they have become very tame and only when the eggs are nearly hatched or when the young are in the nest do they pay any heed to a passer by. Their dislike for dogs is apparently stronger than for men, yet I have never seen them strike either.

In the last week of October or the first in November they leave for the south and are replaced by the Gulls. The colonies in New Jersey and on Plum Island are of course much larger but almost every year new pole nests are added to the colony in Bristol and the future may see a much larger community.—REGINALD HEBER HOWE, JR., *Boston, Mass.*

**The Great Gray Owl in Oneida County, New York.**—A handsome specimen of the Great Gray Owl (*Scotiaptex cinerea*) was shot at White Lake, Oneida County, during a cold snap the first part of last February. It is a rare bird in this locality, its occurrence being recorded about once every ten years.—WILLIAM S. JOHNSON, *Boonville, N. Y.*

**January Occurrence of the 'Sapsucker' in Brookline, Mass.**—On Feb. 6, 1895, one of the coldest days of the year, with the wind blowing at about forty miles an hour, I sighted a small Woodpecker on the lee side of an apple tree on my father's place in Brookline, Mass. As he seemed a little too large for a Downy Woodpecker, I investigated and found him to be an immature male Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*). He was clinging to the trunk of the tree and seemed, upon my approach, to be quite sluggish. I even went so far as to attempt to catch him in my hand, when he suddenly proved that he was not sluggish at all, and flew up into the top of the tree to peck at a frozen apple. So I went back to the house and having procured my gun, gathered him in. He proved to be in fine, fat condition and not crippled in any way. I afterwards found that some nephews of mine had seen him several times on apple trees in the vicinity, but not knowing of the rarity of this occurrence in the month of January, they said nothing to me about it.